

are being caused to our soldiers across the waters. That is the way to make up and honor winter soldiers.

So what is a Winter Soldier? In 1991, a courageous group of veterans of the Vietnam War took their cause to Washington in an event called "Winter Soldier." Today, we honored that tradition, and we looked at a new generation of veterans and a new warfront, Iraq.

The event, which was organized with the Iraq Veterans Against the War, got to the heart of the issue: how this endless occupation is affecting our men and women in uniform and the Iraqi people themselves.

In recent months, we have heard from General David Petraeus, we have heard from Ambassador David Crocker, and we've heard a lot from the administration, all armed with PowerPoint presentations and colorful posters attempting to convince us that after 5 years we are finally making progress in Iraq.

That's what made this morning so unique. This was an opportunity to hear not from the military's top brass but directly from the very soldiers who put their lives on the line to carry out the administration's policies.

Today's event was a continuation of Winter Soldier hearings that were organized earlier this year at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Maryland. Over 3 days, dozens of veterans shared their personal stories and testified about their own experiences on the ground in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These weren't pundits or analysts talking about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the abstract. These were the stories, these were the testimonies of the men and women who had experienced the horrors of war up close and personal.

As I listened to the testimony this morning, I was struck that while each witness brought a unique and very personal perspective towards the occupation of Iraq, there was one consistent thread that connected each and every testimony: that despite the valor and sacrifice of our troops, and at almost every level, the administration's strategy in Iraq has failed and continues to fail.

What a great response to these wonderful soldiers because today's vote says exactly what we need to say: put an end to this war, reject a blank check to extend this occupation into another year, concentrate on funding the redeployment of our troops and the redeployment of our contractors.

We owe nothing less than that to those brave men and women in uniform and those who have been there before them, and we also owe nothing less than that to the Iraqi people.

ENERGY POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, this evening I'm here to address the House and take a moment to talk about something that's on my constituents' minds and my mind and that's energy policy. We have a real need for a strong energy policy in America. Actually, to go further, we have a need for an energy policy in America, and we've not seen leadership out of Washington on this issue. Period.

In 2005, we had an energy act that was passed out of this Chamber, enacted into law that helped get the refining process working. Actually, more pointedly, it helped move forward nuclear power and new plants with nuclear power production, and there were other small changes for the refining process and the licensing and things of that sort, but that wasn't enough. We've not done enough.

Earlier this week, this House passed by a wide margin thankfully, a bipartisan majority that I was happy to vote in favor of, that would suspend the addition of more oil in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Now this, according to most economists and folks that look at oil and energy production, according to them, it would reduce gas prices just a little bit. Well, the reason why it would reduce it just a little bit is because it would take less demand off the marketplace, thereby keeping the same supply that we have but reducing demand, and as such, as most people know with economics, when that happens prices fall.

I think we have to go one step further, and that one step further is increasing capacity. That means we have to have American energy production. That means off the deep waters of our coasts we need to find oil and natural gas. In remote areas of Alaska, we need to harness the oil that is there. Whether it's oil shale in the Rocky Mountain West or energy production and drilling in the Dakotas, I think these are the things that we have to be about, and Congress must put forward a bold initiative to do that.

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And that's the legislation that I have cosponsored here in this Chamber, to increase capacity and production.

But beyond that, I think most Americans know that simply getting more American oil is not enough. Getting more American natural gas is not enough. Increasing refineries here in the United States is not enough. It's a start, but long term we have to have a massive investment, a 21st century Manhattan Project that harnesses our power and ingenuity here in the United States to end our reliance on foreign oil, and go one step further than that, end our reliance on oil. That should be a national priority.

Kennedy demanded that we put a man on the Moon before the end of the 1960s, and we did it. In a dire time, with the greatest war the world has ever known, we developed the Manhattan Project to produce a devastating weapon

on that would hopefully end all wars. That didn't happen in terms of ending the war, but we did produce nuclear power and a nuclear weapon in a few short years.

We must have that same priority here in the United States and demand energy independence from the rest of the world by embracing our alternatives that we have here domestically, embracing our ingenuity, and going that final step to true energy independence. That's what we should be about.

This should not be a partisan issue. We should have a bipartisan majority that says, yes, we will do these things, and we will do these things in a short period of time because that's what the American people deserve.

My constituents are hurting. They have to drive automobiles. We don't have mass transit in my district of any substantive form, really. So my constituents are hurting. And it's a question about being able to take your kids to the beach this summer. But beyond that, many families are struggling just to buy food, keep shelter. I think we have to be very sensitive to the demands of our constituents and realize that they're hurting. And energy and gas prices are the central reason why they're hurting.

We have to get serious about this, put politics aside, and do what's right for our American people. It's the right thing for our American people. It's the right thing for our economy. It's the right thing for our future in the United States.

I look forward to us working together in a bipartisan way for true energy independence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ISRAEL'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Israel's 60th anniversary.

My first visit to Israel was in 1985. It was during the time of the Ethiopian airlift, before the first Intifada, before the second Intifada, and a decade before the tragic assassination of Prime Minister Rabin.

I can remember feeling deeply moved by the powerful mix of history, culture and religion, the sheer humanity that pulsed through the tiny nation of Israel and those charged with its stewardship. I realized, too, that America's stake in the existence and preservation of Israel was nearly as fundamental as the stake of Israel's own citizens, not